

executive officer will have an opportunity to watch his staff organize and prepare a briefing and to redirect priorities for them as needed.

This program has proved quite useful

for orienting new commanders at company and battalion levels, for in-briefing senior level staff officers, and for helping to see that a staff has its priorities in the best order to support the commander.

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48 Hours

Fighting the Reserve Component Battle

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One Army—One Standard. This is the motto that combat arms commanders, whether Active Army or Reserve Component, must set as a goal for their units' training. As the time margin between mobilization and battlefield commitment shrinks, achieving combat readiness, particularly in the Reserve Components, is the highest priority. The units that survive the confusion and physical exhaustion of the first battle of the next war will be the ones that have trained their leaders to be fighters, not training managers.

What makes this such a challenge is the relatively small amount of time a Reserve Component company commander has that can be used for actual training. For example, an urban-based unit such as the 2d Brigade, 42d Infantry Division, in New York, has only ten training days a year for ARTEP training aside from the annual training period, which is set aside for ARTEP evaluations. And too often, training restrictions such as the lack of suitable training sites close to the armory further reduce the usable time in a 48-hour weekend training period to six or eight hours.

To make better use of those 48 hours, a commander must take several steps. First, he must look at an upcoming ARTEP weekend not as a training event but as the first battle of the next war his

company will fight. Then he must train to win that battle.

About 60 to 90 days before the drill, he should review his mission essential task list to see which ARTEP missions and sub-tasks his company needs the most work on—for example, a platoon defense, or a movement to contact and hasty attack. Next, he must select the platoon that is to be tested and advise that platoon leader of the ARTEP mission he is to perform. He might decide, for example, that his 1st Platoon will conduct a platoon defense, and he will task organize the rest of his company to oppose that platoon.

CHALLENGE

In effect, he challenges one of his platoon leaders to battle. Then, forced to rely on his capabilities and those of his platoon to accomplish his mission, the platoon leader can use the remainder of the time before the drill preparing his platoon for its mission.

The company commander should select a training site that will allow his units to maneuver in both daylight and nighttime conditions. He should then have his first sergeant prepare a roster of the people who will not be available for training (because of schools, medi-

cal restrictions, driver training, and the like). Soldiers listed on this roster can be used as drivers to transport the troops and for other support details such as KP and guard duty. In the meantime, the company executive officer—working with the supply, training, and administration sergeants—hammers out the administrative details to support the mission. This frees the commander and his leaders to concentrate on the upcoming battle.

Finally, the commander should coordinate with his battalion headquarters for a controller-evaluator team to control the play during the exercise. (Instead of setting up the training schedule to run from 0700 to 1700, a commander should schedule his exercise—minus support, administrative personnel, and drivers—to run from 1200 Saturday to 0600 Sunday.

The exercise should be conducted as it would be at the National Training Center with free play between the sides. The time for meals, resupply, and rest would be dictated by the tactical situation that the company commander controls and stimulates from his command post. By creating as realistic an environment as possible, he can expose all the elements of his command, from platoon leader to rifleman, to the shock and confusion of battle. This also allows

SAMPLE WEEKEND FTX DRILL SCHEDULE

TIME	EVENT	OIC/NCOIC
Sat. 0700	First formation.	First Sgt
0700-1000	Prepare for deployment.	Plt Sgts
1000-1130	Deploy to training site.	Co Cdr
1200	FTX begins, platoons deploy to start points. Begin tactical operations: 1st Plt: Conduct Defense. Combined 2d and 3d Plts: Conduct Movement to Contact and Hasty Attack against 1st Platoon. Food and resupply as tactical situation permits.	Co Cdr
2000	Personnel not in FTX end work day and rest.	XO/First Sgt
Sun. 0600	FTX ends. Troops recover from field while commander conducts AAR.	Cdr/Plt Ldrs
0700	Breakfast.	First Sgt
0800-1000	Prepare for return to home station.	Plt Sgts
1000-1130	Company re-deploys to home station. (Rested support personnel used as drivers).	Co Cdr
1130-1230	Lunch.	First Sgt
1230-1630	Maintenance.	Co Cdr
1700	Final formation and dismissal.	Co Cdr

him to monitor the reactions of the leaders as they respond to continual changes in the tactical situation.

While the soldiers recover from the FTX, the platoon leaders and the controller-evaluator team should be gathered for an after action review. The commander goes over the key points and the highlights of the battle from beginning to end, and also asks the controller-evaluators to make their assessment.

As an epilogue to the exercise, he

should schedule a separate in-depth review session with the platoon leader whose platoon is being evaluated. He should analyze the platoon leader's conduct through the entire range of the battle from preparation to execution to recovery (see accompanying sample schedule).

If a commander uses this plan, he will achieve the following results:

- Make effective use of the hours of darkness.
- Increase the training time available

from 6 to 8 hours to 12 to 15 hours of continuous training.

- Rigorously test junior officers and NCOs, identifying those who show initiative and the warrior spirit, and then use these leaders to improve the command climate of the company.

- Test the company's SOPs to see if they can stand the stress of non-stop operations. (Then he can use the results to tune up those SOPs and bring them up to standard.)

- Identify weak areas that he can prepare to deal with next time.

If a commander uses the lessons learned during these 48-hour FTXs, by the time his unit's ARTEP evaluation comes around during annual training, his company should have a system that is ready to meet the challenge and come away with better ratings.

Most important, the commander can use the experience to change the climate and direction of his training effort from one of training for training's sake to one of training for war.

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